purchase even the slightly wet wheat in Meerut division during the unseasonal rain in the current year; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL): (a) No targets of procurement are fixed as wheat is procured against voluntary sale by farmers under Government's price support scheme. As on 24-8-1990, a quantity of 110.72 lakh tonnes of wheat has been procured during the current rabi marketing season 1990-91, as compared to 90.04 lakh tonnes procured during 1989-90 rabi season.

(b) and (c) Specifications prescribed for procurement of wheat under price support scheme provide for acceptance of wheat stocks upto moisture level 12 per cent without any cut and upto 14 per cent with full value cut over 12 per cent.

On account of unseasonal rains in U.P., a relaxation in the wheat specifications was allowed in respect of lustre lost grains with no damage to kernel upto 20 per cent wihtout any price cut for procurement for Central Pool. A further relaxation for lustre lost grains, with no damage to kernel, upto 50 per cent without any price cut for procurement for the Central Pool from farmers was allowed in respect of districts Bulandshahar, Muzaffarnagar, Saharanpur, Meerut and Ghaziabad subject to the conditions that stocks procured under relaxed specifications be stacked separately and issued to the State Government of U.P. for distribution through public distribution system against Central allocation on priority bas's. These relaxations were operative till 31st July, 1990.

Schemes for the welfare of handicapped and blind persons

2696. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any comprehensive scheme for the welfare of the handicapped and blind persons in the country; if so, the details thereof; and

(b) what is the number of handicapped and blind in the country as on 30th June, 1989, State-wise, and what steps have been taken so far by Government for the welfare of such persons indicating the number thereof employed so far?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): Yes, Sir. The details are given in Annexure-V. [*See* Appendix CLV Annexure No. 91].

(b) No information is available about the number of handicapped and blind in the country as on 30th June, 1989. However, according to survey conducted by National Sample Survey Organisation in 1981, Category-wise, State-wise total number of estimated handicapped persons in the country are given in the statements at Annexures I to IV [*See* Appendix CLV, Annexure No. 91] The major schemes and programmes being implemented and jobs provided to the handicapped including the blind during the last 3 years is given in Annexure V. [*See* Appendix CLV, Annexure No. 91]

Special Foodgrains Production Programme in Andhra Pradesh

2697. SHRI TALARI MANOHAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a special foodgrains production programme has been launched to give boost to agricultural production in Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the districts selected for this purpose and the main crops proposed to be taken under the programme and to what extent foodgrains production is likely to increase?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Special Foodgrains Production Programme was launched from Kharif 1988. During 1988-89, i.e. the first year of the programme, only rice crop in the 8 selected districts was covered in the State of Andhra Pradesh. From 1990-91, five more districts have been included under rice crop, raising the number of districts to 13. From 1990-91, crop of jowar, ragi and arhar have also been covered in the State. All the 22 districts in the State are covered under the SFPP for arhar. The number and names of districts covered under rice, maize, jowar and ragi are as under:—

S. No.	Name of Crop	Name of the District
1.	Rice	1. East Godavari
		2. Chittoor
		3. Nalgonda
		4. Khammam
		5. Karim Nagar
		6. Nellore
		7. Warangal
		8. West Godavari
		9. Srikakulam
		10. Krishna
		11. Prakasam
		12. Nizamabad
		13. Vijayanagaram
2.	Maize	1. Nizamabad
		2. Warangal
		3. Karimnagar
		4. Medak
3.	Jowar	1. Karnool
		2. Rangareddy
		3. Medak
		4. Mehboobnagar
		5. Adilabad
4.	Ragi	1. Chittoor
		2. Mehboobnagar
		3. Srikakulam
		4. Visakhapatnam

As a result of implementation of Special Foodgrains Production Programme, Foodgrains production in the State of Andhra Pradesh during 1988-89 increased to 129.92 lakh tonnes as against 99.00 lakh tonnes during 1987-88. For 1989-90, the production is estimated around 126.3 lakh tonnes. For 1990-91, a working target of 139.10 lakh tonnes of foodgrains has been kept.

Railway expansion projects in Andhra Pradesh

2698. SHRI TALARI MANOHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number and details of the railway expansion projects received for consideration from Andhra Pradesh Government during the last five years; and

(b) what action is being taken by Government on each of the said proposal during the same period?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Request for the following new railway lines have been received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh during the last 5 years.

1. Patancheru to Peddapalli.
2. Nizamabad to Ramagundam.
3. Nandayal to Yerraguntla.
4. Conversion of M.G. line into B.G. line from Guntur to Dronachellam and laying of parallel B.G. line from Kurnool Tower to Guntakal.
5. New B.G. line from Nadikude to Gudur Khalashasthi.
6. New B.G. railway line from Krishna to Vikarabad.
7. New B.G. railway line from Macherla to Raichur.
8. New B.G. Railway line from Nidubrolu to Nizampatnam.
9. Conversion of M.G. line into B.G. line from Tirupathi to Pakala and parallel B.G. line from Pakala to Katpadi.
10. New B G. line from Kakinada to Kotipalli.
11. New B.G. railway line from Kurnool to Secunderabad.
12. Rayadurg to Hindupur EG line.

Surveys in respect of items 1 to 10 have been completed and the projects found to be financially un-remunerative and therefore have not been taken up. Feasibility study in respect of item 11 has been sanctioned for taking up. Survey in respect of item 12 has not been sanctioned.

Number of railway accidents in South Central Zones

2699. SHRI TALARI MANOHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of accidents which took place in South-Central Zone during the last six months;

(b) what are the reasons for increased number of accidents ; and

(c) what steps are being taken to avoid accidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) There were 33 train accidents on South-Central Railway during the period February 1990 to July 1990. These accidents were mainly due to failure of railway staff and equipment failure.

(c) Railways have a comprehensive on-going campaign to arrest the incidence of accidents. Some of the important measures are:—

(i) induction of technical devices to assist the human effort.

(ii) improvement in quality of maintenance of fixed and moving assets.

(iii) intensive and frequent inspections.